



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES

RIYADH • SAUDI ARABIA



Press Release
For Immediate Release
April 27, 2015

C3 Saudi-American Healthcare Forum 2015

U.S. Embassy Riyadh—

U.S. Science Envoy Dr. Peter Hotez will travel to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, April 25–May 1, in support of President Obama’s initiative to strengthen U.S. science and educational relationships overseas. Dr. Hotez will meet with representatives from the scientific, academic, medical, and business communities to discuss ways to build and strengthen research collaboration networks between scientists and researchers in the United States and Saudi Arabia. Dr. Hotez will participate in the C3 Healthcare Summit in Riyadh.

Also participating in the C3 Healthcare Summit will be Jimmy Kolker, Assistant Secretary for Global Affairs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). Ambassador Kolker is the Department’s chief health diplomat, representing the United States at World Health Organization meetings and as alternate Board Member of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. On April 27 Ambassador Kolker will moderate a session at the C3 Healthcare Summit entitled “The New Era of Outbreaks”.

Dr. Kashef Ijaz of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) will be speaking on the panel describing the shift from infectious diseases to non-communicable diseases. He will emphasize that although the disease burden is shifting towards non-communicable diseases, however public health preparedness and capacity building in areas such as workforce development, surveillance, laboratory strengthening and response to prevent, detect and respond to emerging and re-emerging infectious diseases are essential for all countries and especially for a country like Saudi Arabia which hosts one of the largest mass gatherings on the globe during hajj. These capacities will also help build capacity related to the WHO's International Health Regulations.

Dr. Hotez Bio:

Dr. Hotez is the founding Dean of the National School of Tropical Medicine and Professor of the Departments of Pediatrics and Molecular Virology and Microbiology at Baylor College of Medicine, where he is also the Texas Children’s Hospital Endowed Chair in Tropical Pediatrics. He is president of the Sabin Vaccine Institute, Director of the Texas Children’s Hospital Center for Vaccine Development, and the Baker Institute Fellow in Disease and Poverty at Rice University.

Dr. Hotez is an internationally-recognized physician-scientist and investigator in neglected tropical diseases and vaccine development. He leads the only product development partnership for developing new vaccines for hookworm infection, schistosomiasis, and Chagas disease—diseases affecting hundreds of millions of children and adults worldwide. In 2006, at the Clinton Global



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Initiative, he co-founded the Global Network for Neglected Tropical Diseases to provide access to essential medicines for more than 100 million people who live in extreme poverty throughout the world. Simultaneously, he helped pioneer the concept of ‘vaccine diplomacy’ for international scientific cooperation.

The U.S. Science Envoy Program is one element of the Administration’s commitment to global engagement in science and technology. President Obama announced the program in Cairo in June 2009. Since the program’s inception, Science Envoys have visited 25 countries.

The Science Envoys travel as private citizens and share the knowledge and insights they gain abroad with the U.S. scientific community upon their return. These exchanges contribute to further cooperation and dialogue with key partners.

Assistant Secretary Kolker Bio:

Jimmy Kolker is the Assistant Secretary for Global Affairs at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). In this role, Ambassador Kolker is the Department’s chief health diplomat, representing the United States at World Health Organization meetings and as alternate Board Member of the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The Office of Global Affairs advises the Secretary and HHS’s operating and staff divisions on global health and human services issues.

Amb. Kolker had a 30 year diplomatic career with the U.S. Department of State where he served as the U.S. Ambassador to Uganda (2002-2005) and to Burkina Faso (1999-2002). From 2005-2007, he served as Deputy Global AIDS Coordinator in the Office of the U.S. Global AIDS Coordinator, leading implementation of the President’s Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR). Amb. Kolker was Deputy Chief of Mission at U.S. embassies in Denmark and Botswana and won awards for political reporting at earlier posts in the UK, Sweden, Zimbabwe, and Mozambique.

From 2007-2011, prior to joining HHS, Amb. Kolker was Chief of the HIV and AIDS Section at UNICEF’s New York headquarters. In this role, he led UNICEF’s work on HIV and AIDS, focusing on mother-to-child-transmission of HIV, pediatric treatment, prevention among adolescents and young people, and protection for children and families affected by AIDS.

Amb. Kolker grew up in St. Louis, Missouri. He holds a Master’s in Public Administration from Harvard Kennedy School of Government and a B.A. magna cum laude from Carleton College in Minnesota. He was a Thomas J. Watson Foundation Fellow (1970-1971). He speaks French, Swedish, and Portuguese.

Dr. Kashef Ijaz Bio:

Dr. Kashef Ijaz is the Principal Deputy Director for the Division of Global Health Protection in the Center for Global Health. The division includes some of CDC’s primary global health programs



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such as Global Disease Detection, Field Epidemiology Training, Global Health Security and humanitarian emergencies and recovery work. Dr. Ijaz is a member of division's senior leadership and oversees the science and research agenda for the division and ensures that the scientific projects, protocols and epidemiologic investigations are conducted based on established scientific/epidemiologic methods. He also provides consultation and guidance on programmatic aspects to the branches in the division as well as the policy, communications and partnerships offices in the division.

Previously, he was the Deputy Director for Science and Programs in the Division of Global Disease Detection and Emergency Response. In the recent past, he has served as the Senior Regional Advisor for Field Epidemiology and Laboratory Training Program for the Middle East and North Africa Region in the Division of Public Health Systems and Workforce Development.

During his tenure at CDC, he has also served the Chief of the Outbreak Investigations team in the Division of Tuberculosis Elimination, and then as Chief of the Field Services and Evaluation Branch in the Division of Tuberculosis Elimination. As the lead for the outbreak investigations team, he trained numerous Epidemic Intelligence Service Officers and also responded to numerous TB outbreak investigations both in the United States and internationally. In his appointment as the Chief of the Field Services and Evaluation Branch, he led one of the largest branches (with a budget of over \$100 million) at CDC with staff of over 70 people including public health advisors, epidemiologists and medical officers. He was responsible for the TB control activities in the entire United States and its territories (including funding support and technical assistance). He helped update a data-driven formula for funding of TB control programs in the country as well as developed capacity to conduct program evaluation, including a program evaluation network to build evaluation capacity at state and local levels.

Prior to coming to CDC, Dr. Ijaz was the Research Assistant Professor, Department of Internal Medicine, University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences in Little Rock. He is a physician trained in internal medicine and has a Masters degree in Public Health from University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center. He is also the adjunct Associate Professor in the Department of Epidemiology, Rollins School of Public Health, Emory University. His research involves prevention and control of infectious diseases, molecular epidemiology and genotyping of *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. Dr. Ijaz has more than 40 publications in peer-reviewed journals and a book chapter.